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## Would You Attend a Same-Sex Wedding?

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Would you attend a same-sex wedding ceremony? That question was posed recently to Houston pastor Joel Osteen, and Osteen said that he would attend, if the wedding involved friends. This came just after Osteen indicated that he could not perform a same-sex marriage ceremony, since he believes that homosexuality is a sin.



I recently wrote about this exchange, suggesting that Osteen's position is morally and theologically incoherent. As I said:

*This is beyond mere incoherence. It is moral and theological nonsense. More than that, it is a massive statement of ministerial malpractice. . . . You cannot celebrate what you say you know to be sin. You cannot honestly say that same-sex marriage defies the law of God, and then join in the celebration of that ceremony.*

In recent days, Uri Scaramanga of "Out of Ur" and *Leadership* magazine posed the question to readers, using my comments as a point of reference. The question: "Is Al Mohler right? Is attending a same-sex marriage ceremony the same as performing one? Is it ministerial malpractice? What would you do?"

The responses to that question are revealing. I did not, however, argue that attending a same-sex marriage ceremony is the same as performing one. I did say — and I repeat — that it is incoherent and inconsistent to refuse to perform a same-sex marriage ceremony,

and then to attend one.

The reason for this is deeply rooted in the nature and history of the wedding ceremony. The presence of witnesses at a marriage ceremony affirms the righteous nature of the union. The ceremony then becomes an occasion of shared joy and celebration.

The traditional Christian ceremony, as reflected in *The Book of Common Prayer*, asks if anyone present knows of any reason why the couple should not be joined in holy matrimony. That is not intended as a hypothetical question. It is intended to ensure that no one present knows of any reason that the union should not be solemnized, recognized, and celebrated.

To put the matter straightforwardly, any Christian who knows that same-sex marriage violates God's Law and purpose for marriage knows — and cannot act as if he or she does not know — that a same-sex couple should not be joined in holy matrimony. To remain silent at that point is to abdicate theological and biblical responsibility. Even if the question is not formally asked in the ceremony, the issue remains. We cannot celebrate what we know to be wrong.

Given time, no church, no family, and no individual Christian will escape this question. This will lead, unquestionably, to hard decisions and awkward situations. The time to think about this question is now.

I will pose the question just as it is posed at “Out of Ur” by Uri Scaramanga: What would you do?

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I am always glad to hear from readers. Write me at [mail@albertmohler.com](mailto:mail@albertmohler.com). Follow regular updates on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/AlbertMohler](http://www.twitter.com/AlbertMohler)

Uri Scaramanga, “[Would You Attend a Same-Sex Marriage Ceremony?](http://www.outofur.com/archives/2011/10/would_you_atten.html),” *Out of Ur, Leadership*, Thursday, October 13, 2011.  
[http://www.outofur.com/archives/2011/10/would\\_you\\_atten.html](http://www.outofur.com/archives/2011/10/would_you_atten.html)

R. Albert Mohler, Jr., “[Dragged Kicking and Screaming into the Modern Age? Lessons from Piers Morgan's Interview with Joe Osteen](http://www.albertmohler.com/2011/10/06/dragged-kicking-and-screaming-into-the-modern-age-lessons-from-piers-morgans-interview-with-joel-osteen/),” Thursday, October 6, 2011.  
<http://www.albertmohler.com/2011/10/06/dragged-kicking-and-screaming-into-the-modern-age-lessons-from-piers-morgans-interview-with-joel-osteen/>

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